



Using Your Grant to Increase Your Visibility

Your Maine Arts Commission grant gives you a reason to pursue statewide and local news coverage in many forms. Sharing the good news of your award puts the spotlight on your important work and can spark the interest of other funders and the broader public in general.

The Arts Commission can help, too. Based on materials you provide, we publish stories on www.mainearts.com on the work of grant recipients.

Think visually. Attach high-resolution (8" x 10" [2,400 x 3,000 pixels] or 5" x 7" [1,500 x 2,100] pixels jpg, eps, tiff at a resolution of 300 dpi), to your press release. Avoid group photos or ground-breaking shovel shots. Photos of your art work or your project activity in action are the best way to grab attention. Seize the opportunity for publicity if your event or program is particularly visual – would it be interesting for TV or an online newspaper video?

Determine your audience. Think of weekly newspapers and local radio or television outlets—they have a lot of time and/or paper to fill, and tend to be very open to community stories. Make a list of reporters or editors at local newspapers and assignment editors at radio and television stations who should receive your release.

Know media deadlines. Weekly newspapers may require a release a week or more in advance of an event. Monthly magazines require information a minimum of three weeks and sometimes as much as a month or more in advance.

Keep your release short. Limit your press release to 250 words or fewer, double-spaced, with a contact name, phone number, and email address.

Think like an editor. Be sure your email subject line is clear and includes a line or two describing the artist or project. Provide a substantive quote from the artist or someone involved in the project. Details matter. Answer the “who”, “what”, “where”, “when” and “why” questions. Identify someone to be interviewed if a reporter calls.

“Quote example: This grant from the Maine Arts Commission will help (our arts organization) (my artist career) by exhibiting 50 new works on paper in December 2017. This community has not had access to arts offerings since the closure of the XYZ Gallery six-months ago and this exhibition and accompanying children’s programming will fill that gap.”

Refer to the grant program named in the award letter. For example: “The (arts organization) (artist) received a grant from the Project Grant for Organizations or the Project Grant for Artists.”



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Make it easy for the editor. Your email subject should be the headline of your press release. Drop the press release directly into the body of the email.

OTHER FORMS:

Statewide calendars. In addition to listing your grant-funded event on the Maine Arts Commission's Calendar of Events, Maine Public also offers a statewide community calendar where you can list your event. To promote your event to the many, many people who visit Maine each season, be sure to create an account and post all of your events on visitmaine.com, the Maine Office of Tourism's official site. Many downtowns also have associations that offer online calendars and /or regular newsletters highlighting local events (such as Main Street Maine communities: Augusta, Bath, Belfast, Biddeford, Brunswick, Gardiner, Rockland, Saco, Skowhegan and Waterville.)

Community organizations. Create a list of community organizations that might be interested in your program or event, and spread the word through personal outreach. We find that this kind of word-of-mouth provides the best results since it taps into existing professional and /or personal networks.

Posters. Never underestimate the power of locally posted flyers or posters. Many libraries, town halls, grocery stores, coffee shops / restaurants, schools and businesses have public bulletin boards.